

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

MCT-01 ACDA-12 COME-00 TRSE-00 /079 W

-----009808 040338Z /73

R 031316Z MAY 78

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5971

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 0677

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: IT, PINT

SUBJECT: CORRIERE EDITOR ON MORO CASE

SUMMARY: CORRIERE'S EDITOR DE BELLA SAYS THAT PSI SECRETARY CRAXI IS IN TOUCH WITH MORO KIDNAPPERS, MAY HAVE SPOKEN BY PHONE WITH MORO AND SEEMS CONVINCED MORO WILL NOT BE EXECUTED. AT SAME TIME GRAXI HAS BEEN PRESSING CORRIERE TO SUPPORT HIS NEGOTIATION PROPOSAL BUT DI BELLA SAYS HE HAS REFUSED AND WOULD RESIGN AS EDITOR IF PUBLISHER RIZZOLI TELLS HIM TO SOFTEN CORRIERE OPPOSITION TO COMPROMISE. CRAXI'S MOTIVE IS TO IMPROVE PSI POLITICAL POSITION BUT DE BELLA THINKS PSI COMMITTING ANOTHER ENORMOUS POLITICAL MISTAKE. END SUMMARY.

1. FRANCO DE BELLA, CATHOLIC EDITOR OF CORRIERE DELLA SERA, TOLD BE THIS MORNING THAT PSI SECRETARY CRAXI IS IN TOUCH WITH THE BRIGATE ROSSE. HE DID NOT KNOW HOW BUT SURMISED THAT IT MIGHT BE THROUGH ONE OF THE BR LAWYERS. MOREOVER, BE BELIEVED BUT HAD NO PROOF, THAT CRAXI HAD EVEN SPOKEN TO MORO BY PHONE. ALL OF THIS EXPLAINED WHY CRAXI BELIEVED MORO WOULD NOT BE EXECUTED.

2. CRAXI HAD BEEN PRESSING DE BELLA HARD TO BACK HIS PROPOSAL TO COMPROMISE WITH THE BR. CRAXI HAD EXPLAINED
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THAT HE WAS MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO HELP THE DC AND THAT HE WAS ACTING ON BEHALF OF SOME DG GROUP.

3. DE BELLA DISMISSED THIS MOTIVATION AS EYEWASH. ACCORDING TO HIM, CRAXI IS USING THIS ISSUE; FIRST TO DIFFERENTIATE THE PSI FROM THE DC AND THE PCI; SECOND, TO CATER TO THE VARIOUS EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY LEFT SYMPATHIZERS AND, THIRD,

TO STEAL VOTES FROM THE PCI. MOREOVER, IF MORO IS KILLED, CRAXI CAN CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN THE ONLY LEADER TRYING TO SAVE HIM AND IF HE IS RELEASED ALIVE, MORO AND THE DC WILL OWE HIM A LARGE POLITICAL DEBT. THE CLAIM OF ACTING FOR SOME DC GROUP HAS BEEN DENIED TO DE BELLA BY FANFANI.

4. AS FAR AS DE BELLA IS CONCERNED, HE SAYS THE PSI IS COMMITTING A NEW BLUNDER. IT HAS A POLITICAL DEATH WISH. THE PUBLIC IS TOTALLY OPPOSED TO ANY COMPROMISE WITH THE TERRORISTS WHO SHOT DOWN FIVE GUARDS IN COLD BLOOD. WHEN ASKED HOW ITALY CAN TRADE MORO'S LIFE FOR THAT OF THE MURDERS OF PRISON GUARDS AND OTHER BR VICTIMS, CRAXI SAYS THAT THE LIFE OF A MAJOR POLITICAL LEADER CAN'T BE EQUATED WITH THAT OF A JAILER. HOW, ASKS DE BELLA, CAN A SOCIALIST TALK LIKE THAT? THE RESULT, HE BELIEVES, IS THAT THE PSI WILL TAKE ANOTHER BEATING IN THE UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTIONS.

5. DE BELLA HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE ABILITY TO LOCATE MORO. HE CLAIMED TO BE IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THEM DAILY AND SAYS THAT THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY STUMPED.

6. WHILE THERE ARE SIGNS OF SOME DC WOBBLING, DE BELLA INSISTS THAT ANDREOTTI AND THE OTHER LEADERS ARE ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO CRAXI'S COMPROMISE. THE PCI IS EVEN MORE DUG IN AND WOULD REFUSE TO ALLOW THE GOVERNMENT TO COMPROMISE ALTHOUGH THE PCI IS VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO A CABINET CRISIS.
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OVERALL, HOWEVER, DE BELLA CONCLUDED THAT THE PCI HAS FURTHER STRENGTHENED ITS POSITION WITH THE PUBLIC AS THE GREAT BULWARK OF LAW AND ORDER.FINA

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, KIDNAPPING, EDITORS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MILAN00677
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780189-0895
Format: TEL
From: MILAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780598/aaaadfjd.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e43523a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2805668
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CORRIERE EDITOR ON MORO CASE SUMMARY: CORRIERE'S EDITOR DE BELLA SAYS THAT PSI SECRETARY CRAXI IS IN TOUCH WITH MORO KIDNAPPERS, MAY HAVE S
TAGS: PINT, IT, (MORO, ALDO)
To: ROME
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e43523a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014